January 11, 2015

Greetings from Dr. Charisse L. Gillett, President of Lexington Theological Seminary

I want to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude for the members—past, present and future—of Beargrass Christian Church. And I especially want to note how thankful I am for the Beargrass Scholars program.

For some fifty years, you all have helped men and women say “Yes!” to a call to ministry. Because of you, over seventy pastors have been prepared for ministry at Lexington Theological Seminary. Their ministries have taken on various forms and impacted countless lives. “Thank you,” doesn’t seem quite enough…and yet, “Thank you.” For all that you have offered to the wider church, even to the world, with your generosity and commitment to the Seminary, we stand in gratitude.

It is in this spirit of gratitude that Beargrass Christian Church was awarded the Congregational Partner Award at the May 2014 commencement ceremony. The award was accepted by Beargrass member and LTS trustee, Mrs. Leslie Goeghagen and Beargrass Minister of Faith Development Rev. Dr. John Hull. We are deeply grateful for their leadership and for that of Rev. Dr. Leigh Bond.

This year the Seminary celebrates its sesquicentennial; and, it only seems appropriate that as we officially begin our 150th celebration, we do so at a place that has made such significant contributions to us all through your support.
The Beargrass Scholars

Over the last fifty years, some seventy men and women have been able to pursue a call to ministry and a theological education at Lexington Theological Seminary because of the Beargrass Scholars program at Beargrass Christian Church. This is a tremendous thing, and both the Seminary and the wider church stand in gratitude for such generosity of spirit and resources.

Those seventy men and women include some of the finest and most influential leaders of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ): seminary professors, regional ministers, outstanding congregational pastors, youth ministers, and chaplains have passed through the classrooms and hallways of LTS thanks to Beargrass, their work and witness having made an impact across the globe.

Near as anecdotal history can tell, the Beargrass Scholars began as a way to offer back to the wider faith community a portion of financial resources at Beargrass. Beargrass has long enjoyed strong ties to the Seminary, including several members of the Beargrass pastoral staff across the years who have also been LTS alumni. And, when the scholarship program first began, its strongest support came from longtime Beargrass pastors Walter Lawrenson and Will Van Nostrand.

It is also important to note that the funding for the Beargrass Scholars has always come from the annual operating budget at Beargrass—not endowment funds. Regular, conscious, intentional giving to the Seminary in such a way that the legacy of both the Seminary and Beargrass are spread far and wide. It is in recognition and celebration of this legacy that the Seminary awarded Beargrass the Congregational Partner Award at the May 2014 graduation ceremony.

The first Beargrass Scholars named were Reverends Jim Burton and Kerry Reed, both of whom enjoyed many years in active congregational ministry and who are both still among us today. The most recent Beargrass Scholar named is Mr. Steven Straub, who, while he is in seminary, serves the church that raised him—Beargrass—as pastor to children and their families.

There are no words to entirely encompass the gratitude, the faith-sharing, the holy testament to giving, that has been made known in the work of the Beargrass Scholars. May we all know, in some way in our lives, such beautiful generosity.
REV. DEANN ANDERSON ‘86/1983-84
Co-Pastor
CENTRAL CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
DANVILLE, IL

REV. DAVID AUBREY ‘81/1979-81
Pastor
LEXINGTON, KY

REV. KRIS BENTLEY ‘96/1993-96
Pastor, Coordinator
NEWTOWN CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST) &
LTS LILLY ENDOWMENT GRANT
LEXINGTON, KY

REV. VERNIE BOLDEN, STUDENT/2012-14
Student Pastor
LOUDON AVENUE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF
CHURCH)
ROANOKE, VA

REV. BRUCE BREEDING ‘90/1988-90
Minister
STAMPING GROUND CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF
CHRIST)
STAMPING GROUND, KY

DR. DONALD F. BREZAVAR ‘91/1989-91
Pastor
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
INDEPENDENCE, MO

REV. DEAN BUCALOS ‘94/1993-94
Pastor/Coordinator
MISSION BEHIND BARS AND BEYOND
LOUISVILLE, KY

REV. JAMES R. BURTON ‘69/1966-70
Pastor - Retired
TROPICAL SANDS CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF
CHRIST)
Palm Beach Gardens, FL

REV. TOMMY COOK ‘FORMER STUDENT’/2005-07
Pastor
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
LOUISVILLE, KY

REV. JULIA CORY ‘14/2012-14
Co-Pastor
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
CHILLCOTE, OH

MS. ANNA HOPE CURWOOD 2011-14
Current Student
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
FT. THOMAS, KY

REV. JAY DESKINS 2009-11
Pastor
INDIANAPOLIS, IN

REV. STEVEN DOAN ‘83/1981-83
Chaplain/Co-Pastor
PAINTER GARRISON UMC & CHAPLAIN ENDORSER DISCI-
PLES HOME MISSIONS
BELLE HAVEN, VA

REV. STEVE DUNSTAN* ‘89/1984-88

REV. KAYE EDWARDS ‘80/1976-78
Director of Family Ministry, Retired
DISCIPLES HOME MISSION
LYNCHBURG, VA

REV. JAN EHRMANTRAUT ‘83/1981-83
Retired - Regional Minister,
CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN KENTUCKY (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)
LEXINGTON, KY

*DECEASED
Dr. David N. Felty ’74/1970-74
Pastor
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Greenacres, FL

Rev. Zach Fuqua ’2002/1999-02
Academic Advisor
University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY

Pastor
First Christian Church
Sioux City, IA

Dr. W. Clark Gilpin ’70/1967-70
Retired-Professor
University of Chicago
Stefensville, MI

Rev. Douglas W. Gilpin ’89/1987-89
Pastor-Retired
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Kearney, MO

Rev. Betsy Jones-Stieier Goehrig ’81/1980-81
Pastor
Blessing Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Tallahassee, FL

Dr. Ronald C. Greene ’73/1982–83
Minister
Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Great Falls, MT

Rev. June Haislip ’80/1979-80
Minister
Thilippi Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Deltaville, VA

Rev. Homer W. Hecht ’86/1983-84
Pastor
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Liberty, KY

Rev. Maurice Johnson* ’75/1972-1975

Rev. Vernon E. Johnston ’93/1990-93
Pastor Retired
Pineville, NC

Rev. Linda J. Jones ’1990/1987-90
Minister
Christian Church in Kentucky
Louisville, KY

Dr. Larry Paul Jones ’82/1980-82
Pastor
Cincinnati, OH

Rev. William Jones* ’81/1978-79

Rev. Dennis M. Lundblad ’87/1984-87
Instructor
University of North Carolina
Asheville, NC

Rev. Douglas Mikell* ’80/1979-80

Rev. Lori McKinley ’2002/2000-03
Pastor
Fort Thomas, KY

*Deceased
DR. JAMES M. McLEAN ‘70/1966-70
Retired Pastor
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Glasgow, KY

REV. AMANDA WAGONER MEADE ‘2009/2002-05
Associate Pastor
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Jeffersonville, IN

DR. ROBERT E. MOOTY ‘79/1978-79
Senior Pastor
Timberlake Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Lynchburg, VA

REV. MICHAEL MOORE ‘73/1970-1973
Director of Social Services
Family Care Center
Bowling Green, KY

REV. CHRIS MORTON ‘93/1991-93
Executive Director
Associated Ministries of Tacoma
Tacoma, WA

MS. SUSANNA ORENSKY, Student/2013-14
Pastor
Deltona Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Deltona, FL

REV. MARK PREVO ‘77/1975-76
Pastor-Retired
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Mattoon, IL

MR. JOSEPH PUSATERI, Student/2011-14
Pastor
Simpsonville Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Simpsonville, KY

*Deceased

REV. KERRY J. REED ‘69/1966-67
Senior Pastor-Retired
Gender Road Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Columbus, OH

REV. SARAH RENFRO ‘10/2007-10
Pastor
Monterey Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Monterey, KY

DR. GERALD L. SHEPARD ‘77/1973-76
Senior Minister
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Danville, KY

REV. C. DOUGLAS SMITH ‘96/1994-96
Vice President
The Montpelier Foundation
Charlottesville, VA

REV. STEVEN A. SMITH ‘97/1996-97
Pastor
United Disciples of Christ Church (United Church of Christ)
Charleston, WV

REV. RACHELE ROYALE SNELLGROVE ‘99/1996-99
Pastor
Victory Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Lexington, KY

REV. STARLA SOLAN WALKER ‘10/2009-10
Pastor
Louisville, KY

Associate Pastor
First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Columbia, MO

REV. J. C. STEELE, III ‘84/1983-84
Retired, Minister
Deltona Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
Deltona, FL
Though I would be honored to worship with you this morning, I have a prior commitment to preach at Warsaw Christian Church. Please know that I often think of your congregation and its commitment to supporting students at Lexington Theological Seminary. I graduated in 1983, having benefited from a Beargrass Scholarship for the last two years of seminary. I remember my mother telling me at the time: “Don’t you ever forget to thank those people for what they did for you!” From my initial ministry at LTS working with alumni/ae and annual giving, to nine years as pastor of Antioch Christian Church, to 10 years on the staff of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kentucky, to 5 years as Minister of Pastoral Care at Central Christian Church, Lexington, your gift of financial assistance has been a symbolic reminder of a congregation’s joy in nurturing the faith for future generations. Following that ministry, I accepted a position with LTS to coordinate their clergy mentor program for MDiv students in their new online program. It was a joy to return to my alma mater and be part of an exciting transition to a new way of providing seminary education. Though now retired and thoroughly enjoying being a grandmother of two little girls, my ministry continues through leadership of a grief support group and occasional preaching. Thank you for your affirmation of my ministry, your support that gave my family financial breathing room, but most of all, for your hope in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Jan Ehrmantraut
Lexington, Kentucky
Thank you notes

It is with a humble heart that I write thank you for the financial blessing of a tuition scholarship (2014-2015 academic year) towards my pursuit of a Masters of Divinity degree at the Lexington Theological Seminary in Lexington KY.

Please accept that as a seminarian there are times when I might reflect upon my circumstances and question my purpose and search for meaning among the challenging studies of seminary, the stressors of job, and the pressures of family life. This gracious gift from Beargrass Christian Church offers a sense of confirmation for me in striving to live into God’s call and for that I write thank you. The encouragement and generosity shown to me by Beargrass has not only been invaluable, but very much appreciated.

Again, thank you so much.

In Christ,

Vernie L. Bolden, Jr

I was so deeply blessed to be a Beargrass Scholar and to attend LTS at a time of great change. I owe so much for the way LTS formed my theological mind and shaped my ministry. Without the help of the dear folks at Beargrass Christian Church, my three years in Lexington would have been a much greater struggle. Please know that I will be with you all in spirit and that I am immensely grateful for the combined support of the Church and the Seminary. I hope that I am paying that forward in every way I can and still serving Christ in ministry and in chaplaincy staff for our national office.

Blessings in Christ,

Rev. Steven Doan

Belle Haven, Virginia

I appreciate the generous scholarship Beargrass Christian Church gave so that I could complete my Seminary education. Without this support, I would not have been able to attend LTS. I consider my years in ministry and know Beargrass Christian Church and LTS were instrumental in allowing me to follow God’s call.

Rev. Deann Halligan Anderson

Central Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Danville, Illinois
Thank you… notes

October 26, 2014

Beargrass Christian Church
Attn: Ms. Sandy Sundheimer
4100 Shelbyville Road
Louisville, KY 40207

Dear Ms. Sundheimer:

Greetings from Jerusalem! I am writing to express my sincere thanks to Beargrass Christian Church for the very generous scholarship of $2500 it provided to help me defray tuition costs at Lexington Theological Seminary (LTS). I appreciate Beargrass Christian Church’s willingness to support higher education and learning, and am extremely grateful for its generosity and support of my seminary education.

As you may know, I have been at LTS since April 2012 and have completed approximately one-third of my M.Div. It is a blessing to be able to pursue God’s calling in ministry despite the geographic distance from Kentucky, and I can’t speak highly enough about the distance learning programs that LTS provides. Moreover, being in a congregational placement at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in the Old City of Jerusalem – only a stone’s throw from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre where Jesus is said to have been crucified and (briefly) buried – is truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Although I am a Disciple of Christ, I serve as an intern with the English-speaking congregation, and we are affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jordan and the Holy Land and the ELCA. Our members walk in accompaniment with our Palestinian sisters and brothers from the sister Arabic-speaking congregations in Jerusalem, Ramallah, Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, and Beit Jala. Through my ministry here, I have been able to help lead worship, write liturgy, teach Bible studies, preach, and other duties. But more importantly, in my two years here, I have been able to gain an understanding of the political, economic, cultural, religious, and social challenges, complexities, and realities in Jerusalem, Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza. My tenure here has proven to be a rich landscape in which to grapple with innumerable theological, scriptural, and ethical issues.

My husband and I have roughly nine months remaining in our tour in Jerusalem, at which time we’ll transfer to our next assignment with the U.S. Department of State. Regardless of where we land, I am looking forward to continuing my education at LTS. The remainder of the 2014-2015 academic year, exciting in its own right, is made all the more motivating as a result of the investment that Beargrass Christian Church has made in my education and its confidence in my ministerial abilities.

Please pass along my grateful thanks to the congregation for its generosity and selflessness.

Peace and blessings,

Rachel Leslie
Seminarian
Lexington Theological Seminary
January 7, 2015

Dear Beargrass Christian Church,

While I cannot be with you on this special weekend, I am with you in spirit and love. I send my deepest gratitude for the wonderful way you have nurtured me and so many other seminarians during our years of preparation for ministry by providing scholarships.

I will be celebrating 34 years of ordained ministry this June. Your support during my time at Lexington Theological Seminary not only helped me complete my studies, but have been instrumental in nurturing and strengthening me for the long haul.

You have helped equip and empower this minister to serve in established congregations, to establish new congregations, to minister to other ministers through regional ministry, and to bind up the brokenhearted through hospice and police chaplaincies. You have reached thousands of lives through my life alone. And I have returned to my beloved Lexington Theological Seminary to serve as a Trustee and as a Mentor of students, to help continue this legacy. The impact of your gifts continue to give, rippling out to share the message, ministry, and love of Christ with our churches, our communities, and the world.

I thank God for you, Beargrass Christian Church and Lexington Theological Seminary, for all you have done and continue to do, in preparing pastor for people!

Blessings,

Betsy Steier Goehrig

Dr. Betsy Goehrig, Pastor

Blessings, P.O. Box 16022, Tallahassee, FL 32317-6022
www.blessingsdoc.org  850-933-8012  drbetsy.blessings@gmail.com
**Beargrass Christian Church Scholars by year**

1966-67
James Burton  
James McLean  
Kerry Reed  
Lawrence Westbrook

1967-68  
James Burton  
Clark Gilpin  
James McLean

1968-69
James Burton  
Clark Gilpin  
James McLean

1969-70
James Burton  
Clark Gilpin  
James McLean  
Coll Wise

1970-71
David Felty  
Michael Moore  
Coll Wise

1971-72
David Felty  
Michael Moore  
Coll Wise

1972-73
David Felty  
Michael Moore  
Maurice Johnson*

1973-74
David Felty  
Maurice Johnson*  
Gerald Shepard

1974-75
Maurice Johnson*  
Phil Rushing  
Gerald Shepard

1975-76
Mark Prevo  
Gerald Shepard  
Johnny Wray

1976-77
Kaye Edwards  
John Weaver*  
Johnny Wray

1977-78
Kaye Edwards  
John Weaver*  
Johnny Wray

1978-79
William Jones  
Robert Mooty  
Lee Parrish

1979-80
David Aubrey  
June Haislip  
Douglas Mikell

1980-81
David Aubrey  
Betsy Steier Goehrig  
Larry Paul Jones

1981-82
Steven Doan  
Jan Ehrmantraut  
Larry Paul Jones

1982-83
Steve Doan  
Jan Ehrmantraut  
Ronald Greene

1983-84
Deann H. Anderson  
Homer Hecht  
J.C. Steele

1984-85
Stephen Dunstan  
Dennis Lundblad  
Lori Lynn Wachter

1985-86
Steve Dunstan  
Dennis Lundblad  
Lori Lynn Martin Wachter

1986-87
Steve Dunstan  
Dennis Lundblad  
Lori Lynn Martin Wachter

*Deceased
Beargrass Christian Church Scholars by year

1987-88
Steve Dunstan
Douglas Gilpin
Linda Jones

1988-89
Bruce Breeding
Douglas Gilpin
Linda Jones

1989-90
Bruce Breeding
Donald Brezavar
Linda Jones
Christopher Whitehead

1990-91
Donald Brezavar
Vernon Johnston
Christopher Whitehead

1991-92
Sara Galindo
Vernon Johnson
Christopher Morton

1992-93
Vernon Johnson
Christopher Morton
Patricia Trotter

1993-94
Kristen Bentley
Dean W. Bucalos
Patricia Trotter

1994-95
Kristen Bentley
Douglas Smith
Rebecca Zelensky

1995-96
Kristen Bentley
Douglas Smith
Rebecca Zelensky

1996-97
Steven Smith
Rachele F. Snellgrove

1997-98
Rachele F. Snellgrove
James Spear

1998-99
Rachele F. Snellgrove
James Spear

1999-2000
Zachery Fuqua
James Spear

2000-01
Zachery Fuqua
Lori McKinley

2001-02
Zachery Fuqua
Lori McKinley

2002-03
Lori McKinley
Amanda Wagoner

2003-04
Amanda Wagoner
David Wilde

2004-05
Amanda Wagoner
David Wilde

2005-06
Tommy Cook
Tina Glosson Theiler

2006-07
Tommy Cook
Tina Glosson Theiler

2007-08
Tina Glosson Theiler
Sarah Renfro

2008-09
Tina Glosson Theiler
Sarah Renfro

2009-10
Jay Deskins
Sarah Renfro
Starla Solan Walker

2010-2011
Jay Deskins

2011-2012
Anna Curwood
Joseph Pusateri

2012-2013
Julie Cory

2013-2014
Vernie Bolden

2014-2015
Anna Curwood
Susanna Orensky

2015-2016
Joseph Pusateri
Steven Straub
Lexington Theological Seminary is the oldest professional ministerial school related to the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The Seminary dates its founding from 1865 when it was The College of the Bible, one of several colleges in the Kentucky University (later Transylvania University). The Seminary acquired its own charter in 1878. The College of the Bible occupied buildings on the campus of Transylvania University until 1950, when it moved to the Limestone location. At its centennial in 1965, The College of the Bible was renamed Lexington Theological Seminary.

In 1936 the College of the Bible began requiring an undergraduate degree for admission. Two years later the Seminary played a leading role in the formation of The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada, the official accrediting agency of the theological institutions. The Seminary also established the first chair of religious education in the nation, instituted one of the first courses on the ecumenical church, and was the first seminary in the United States to offer clinical pastoral training as part of its curriculum. Lexington Theological Seminary strives to prepare faithful leaders for the church of Jesus Christ, and thus to strengthen the church’s participation in God’s mission for the world.

In 2010, LTS began the first phase of moving the institutional mission into the new millennium with the launching of a congregational-based, competency-centered and internet accessed Master of Divinity degree. In 2012, LTS adopted four strategic initiatives to guide the Seminary’s future: academic excellence and relevance, sustain pastors in ministry, financial equilibrium and growth and cultivate and develop a quality place to work and study. In 2013, LTS initiated the second phase of this transition by moving from the residential Limestone campus as the Seminary explores and charts new course.